(ii) Requiring all the schools to send their students for Board Examinations of the State Board, the CBSE or the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations, as the case may be.

(iii) Improving the physical facilities and other educational inputs in schools through a number of Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Programmes.

(c) and (d) In order to give recognition to teachers of outstanding merit, a scheme titled "The Scheme of National Awards to Teachers" was started in 1958-59. Under the Scheme awards are given anually to outstanding school teachers of States/Union Territories. Each award consists of a certificate of merit, a silver medal and a cash prize of Rs. 10,000/-.

Literacy rate in Orissa

2925. SHRIMATI ILA PANDA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that the literacy rate in Orissa is low because of non-availability of sufficient funds from the Central Government; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPTT. OF EDUCATION AND DEPTT. OF CULTURE) (KUMARI SELJA): (a) No Sir.

(b) Keeping in view the Educational backwardness of Orissa, due consideration is being given while formulating schemes to improve literacy rate and to reduce regional imbalance. Out of 30 Districts in the State, so far 17 districts have been brought under Total Literacy Campaigns and 5 districts under Post Literacy Campaigns. Centrally sponsored schemes like Non-Formal Education, Teachers Training etc. have also been extended to Orissa.

UNICEF report on development of Chidren

2926. SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have examined the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Report according to which the involvement in the physical, mental and emotional development of all children, is the very foundation for economic development, social cohesion and political stability;

(b) if so, whether Government has formulated any child development plan aimed at protecting children, overcoming absolute poverty, slowing down of the population growth, arresting the environmental deterioration on priority basis;

(c) if so, what are its broad features and the resources earmarked for achieving these basic development goals; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPTT. OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT) (SMT. BASAVA RAJESHWARI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The National Policy for the Welfare of Children adopted by the Government of India in the year 1974 clearly enunciates that the nation's children are a supremely important asset. Their nurture and solicitude is our responsibility. It also states that the programmes for children should find a prominent part in our National Plan for the development of human resources, endowed with the skills and motivations needed by society.

The policies and programmes for the young children have been accordingly formulated. In keeping with the national policy for children, the Constitutional provisions and Directive